



not simple

NATSUME ONO

prologue	iii
#01	1-13
#02	135
#03	155
#04	159
#05	173
#06	183
#07	189
#08	195
#09	199
#10	213
#11	227
#12	231
epilogue	245





AFTER YOUR
REUNION WITH
THAT WOMAN,
I'LL START THE
STORY THERE.



ALL
RIGHT?

prologue

not simple





DAD'S
FOUND OUT
ABOUT OUR
PLAN!

HE SAID
HE'S GONNA
KILL YOU.



THAT'S WHY
I CAN'T SEE
YOU RIGHT
NOW.

IT'S NOT
FUNNY.

GOOD
THING HE
DOESN'T
KNOW WHAT
YOU LOOK
LIKE.

BUT HE
WOULD IF
WE MET.
SO WE CAN'T
BE SEEN
TOGETHER.

I'VE TOLD
YOU WHAT
HE'S DONE
BEFORE.
RIGHT?



I JUST
HAVE TO
MAKE HIM
THINK YOU'RE
SOMEONE
ELSE

DON'T
WORRY I'LL
FIGURE
SOMETHING
OUT



DON'T
FORGET YOU
PROMISED
YOU'D TAKE
ME WITH YOU



YOU
BETTER
NOT LEAVE
WITHOUT
ME



DAD'LL LET
HIS GUARD
DOWN IF HE
THINKS HE'S
GOTTEN RID
OF YOU



...AND I'VE
FOUND JUST
THE GUY TO
BE YOUR
STAND-IN



HE JUST
MIGHT NOT
EVER USE
HIS LEGS
AGAIN...

THAT'S
ALL...

I'LL ASK HIM
OUT RIGHT IN
FRONT OF
DAD'S BOSS
AND MAKE IT
LOOK LIKE
WE'RE SEEING
EACH OTHER.



GUTTER PUNKS.
NONELESS
BECAUSE THEY
THINK IT'S
EASIER THAN
ACTUALLY
DOING ANY
WORK.

THERE
ARE SO
MANY
OF THEM
THESE
DAYS.



DAD
WOULDN'T
ACTUALLY
KILL HIM.

DON'T
WORRY



WAKE
UP.









YOU'RE AUSTRALIAN?

NEAR MELBOURNE...



BOTH, EITHER, JUST TALK.

YOU MEAN WHERE WAS I BORN...?

SO WHERE'D YOU LIVE BEFORE?



...NEW YORK WAS THE LAST PLACE.

THEN WHERE IN THE U.S. DID YOU LIVE? AROUND HERE?



WAIT'S WRONGST EAT.



BEFORE THAT I DIDN'T HAVE A PLACE TO STAY SO I MOVED AROUND.

THANK YOU.

YOUR COFFEE.



I DIDN'T
WANT TO
BE ALONE.

WHY ARE YOU
DOING THIS
FOR ME?



I HAVE
A FRIEND
THERE.



TELL
ME A
STORY.

NEW
YORK?



WE CAME
TOGETHER
FROM
AUSTRALIA.

HE'S
WRITING
A NOVEL.

HE'S BEEN
LIVING IN
NEW YORK
FOR A WHILE.

SO HE LET
ME STAY AT
HIS PLACE.



WOULDN'T
FLORIDAYS
BEEN BETTER?
YEAR-ROUND
SUN AND ALL...







YOU
REALLY
LIKE THIS
BOY?

MAYBE
YOU'RE
JUST
BORED.

MAYBE YOU
JUST WANT TO
BE DIFFERENT
FROM EVERY-
ONE ELSE.



YEAR.

HE'S
COMING
BACK
HERE FOR
WORK.

...BUT HE'S
TAKING ME
WITH HIM
WHEN HE
LEAVES.



I DON'T
WANT TO
TALK TO
YOU ANY-
MORE!

IF YOU'RE
NOT ON MY
SIDE, THEN
FORGET IT!

OR MAYBE
YOU JUST
WANT TO
GET AWAY
FROM DAD.



... YOU
KNOW A
LONG TIME
AGO...

YOUR AUNT
JENNY TRIED
TO GET AWAY
LIKE YOU
ARE NOW





THEY
HUSTLE'D
TALKED
ABOUT
A LOT OF
THINGS.

JENNY
TOLD HIM
ABOUT
HERSELF
TOO.

INTERESTING.

EVENTUALLY
SHE BEGAN
HAVING
SECOND
THOUGHTS
ABOUT
LEAVING HER
FAMILY.



AND HE
URGED HER
NOT TO
RUN AWAY.



AND
SO SHE
DECIDED
TO STAY.



ALL HE KNEW
WAS THAT SHE
WAS SOMEWHERE
IN AMERICA,
AND HE WANDERED
FROM STATE TO STATE FOR HALF
A YEAR TRYING
TO FIND HER.

IT HAD
BEEN
OVER TEN
YEARS
SINCE HE'D
SEEN HIS
SISTER.



IT
TURNED
OUT HIS
SISTER...

...WAS
POSSIBLY
HIS MOTHER,
WHICH IS WHY
HE WAS SO
DRIVEN TO
FIND HER.



SHE TOLD
HE THEY
MADE A
PROMISE
WHEN THEY
PARTED.



WHAT
HAPPENED
TO THE
GUY?



BUT SHE
DIDN'T
WANT IT.

HE WAS
MORE THAN
TEN YEARS
YOUNGER
THAN HER.



TO MEET
IN THREE
YEARS...

AND
TELL EACH
OTHER HOW
THEY'D BEEN
DOING.



JENNY WAS
SURE THIS
MAN FELL IN
LOVE WITH
HER, AND THAT
IF SHE'D
WANTED IT...

...SHE
COULD'VE
SPENT THE
REST OF
HER LIFE
WITH HIM.



SHE DID SAY
THOUGH, THAT
THE NEXT TIME
THEY MET SHE
WAS SURE
SHE'D LEAVE
WITH HIM.



YOU DON'T KNOW
WHAT DAY
SPECIFICALLY,
THINK?

HE
DIDN'T
TELL
ME.



IT'LL BE
THREE YEARS
THIS YEAR.



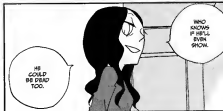
DID THEY
EVER MEET
AGAIN?



SHE
MUST'VE
BEEN
DISAP-
POINTED.



SET OF
COURSE,
JEREMY'S NO
LONGER
WITH US.



HE
COULD
BE DEAD
TOO.

WHO
KNOWS
IF HE'LL
EVEN
SHOW.



IF YOU
WANT TO DO
SOMETHING
DRASTIC, DO IT
WHILE YOU'RE
STILL YOUNG,
IRRE-
VERSIBLE.

IT WON'T
BE AS
EASY WHEN
YOU'RE
OLDER.





IN AN
ACCIDENT.

MY AUNT
DIED LAST
YEAR.



I'LL TAKE
YOU THERE
TOMORROW.

I'LL
BORROW
MOM'S
CAR.



THANK
YOU.



IS HER
GRAVE...
NEARBY?

IT'S
A BIT
OF A
WALK.

...CAN
I GO
VISIT IT?

OF
COURSE.
SHE'D
LIKE THAT.



DON'T
LOOK AT ME
LIKE THAT.

IT MIGHT
MY FAULT.

I GOTTA
CALL MY
DAD!

YOU
SEEM
NICE.

OH, HRY.
DID YOU
EVER FIND
YOUR
SISTER?

OH!

ACTUALLY,
DON'T TELL
ME—I KNOW
MY MOM'LL
WANNA HEAR
THIS TOO.

UH...

MOM'LL
LOVE THIS.
DAD WOUL'D
BE AROUND
FOR DINNER,
SO IT SHOULD
BE ALL
RIGHT.

I'LL
INVITE YOU
TO DINNER
TONIGHT.
SO TELL
US THEN.

I NEED
TO GET
TO THE
STATION.

...SURE.



BUT MAKE
IT QUICK,
AND DON'T
GO TOO
FAR.

THERE'S
ONE
IN THE
DINER.

WHAT
DO
YOU
NEED
TO
DO?

I HAVE
TO MAKE
A CALL.

BATH-
ROOM.



DEAD.

MOM



I THINK HE'S
OUT IN THE
GARDEN.
HE'S ON THE
PHONE WITH
SOMEBODY.

MOM, LISTEN.
YOU KNOW THAT
MAN JENNY WAS
SUPPOSED TO
MEET? WELL,
I MET HIM.

I'M WITH
HIM RIGHT
NOW. YOU
DON'T MIND IF
I BRING HIM
HOME WITH
ME, RIGHT?



WHERE
ARE
YOU?

YOU KNOW
IF YOU LEAVE
YOUR DAD
ALONE SOME-
THING'LL
HAPPEN TO
YOUR BOY-
FRIEND.

OH
KAY! PUT
DAD ON THE
LINE!









IAN!!



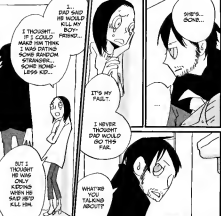
OH, NO...
THEY
REALLY
DID IT...

SOMEBODY
CALL AN
AMBULANCE...











SHE
WANTS
TO SEE
HIM

MY
MOTHER'S
/LIVE/

NOW THAT
SHE'S GONE,
LIFE HAS NO
MEANING
FOR HIM.

BUT SHE'S
NOT DEAD!
I MEAN,
IT WASN'T
MY AUNT!



MELODRAMMA
TO THE
VERY END...



...

IT
WAS MY
MOTHER
AND SHE
LIED
TO ME.





BESIDES,
LOOK AT HIM.
DON'T YOU
THINK IT'S A
LITTLE LATE?



WHAT? YOU'RE
SUPPOSED
TO BE HIS
FRIEND?

AREN'T
YOU THE
ONE HE
LIVED WITH
IN NEW
YORK?

LOOK, HE
DOESN'T
HAVE THE
WILL TO LIVE
ANYMORE.
THERE'S
NOTHING I
CAN DO.

... YOU
KNOW ALL
ABOUT
HIM, DON'T
YOU?

WHAT
HAPPENED?
WHERE'S
HIS SISTER?



WHY
AREN'T YOU
HELPING
HIM? WHY
AREN'T YOU
TOUCHING
HIM?



I CAN'T
TELL YOU.



LET'S JUST SAY
HE DIDN'T HAVE
MUCH LUCK IN LIFE,
AND WHATEVER
LITTLE HE HAD JUST
RAN OUT BECAUSE
OF YOU.



YOUR
NAME'LL
BE...
ALICE.

YOU'LL
BE IN
IT TOO.



THAT'S
WHAT YOU
LOOK LIKE.



I'M GOING
TO WRITE
ABOUT HIM.

TURN IT
INTO A
NOVEL AND
PUBLISH IT.



THE BOOK
SHOULD BE
OUT IN ABOUT
A YEAR.
READ IT.

ARE YOU
SERIOUS...?
CAN'T YOU
SEE YOUR
FRIEND IS
DYING?



A GUY'S
ON THE
FLOOR
BLEEDING.

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?

OVER
HERE?

DON'T YOU
THINK YOU
SHOULD
GET OUT
OF HERE?

I WON'T
TELL ANYBODY
ANYTHING, BUT
MAKE SURE 'TAD'
KNOWS THAT.







IT'S
NOT
FAR.



IF HE
HADN'T
MET MOM,
SHE WOULD
HAVE
LEFT US.

SO ISN'T
IT A GOOD
THING THAT
HE'S DYING?





WELCOME
BACK.

ROW'S
COLLEGE
GETTING
USED TO IT

YEAH,
IT'S A
LOT OF
FUN.



IRENE.



OH...
NO.

SOMEONE
ELSE LEFT
IT AND I
WAS JUST
SKIMMING
THROUGH IT.

YOU'RE
LEAVING
THAT BOOK
YOU WERE
READING?
ISN'T IT
YOUR'S?



FROM.





IN THE BOOK,
THE WRITER
KILLS HIMSELF
A YEAR AFTER
THE GUY DIES.



IT'S ABOUT
THIS REALLY
SILLY GUY WHO
FALLS INTO ROCK
BOTTOM AND
ENDS UP GETTING
KILLED IN A CASE OF
MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

WHAT'S IT
ABOUT?



AND HERE'S
THE THING. THE
MAN WRITING THE
STORY IS GAY.
AND HE HANGS
AROUND THIS OTHER
GUY AND JUST
OBSERVES HIM.



THE RUMOR
IS THAT THE
NOVEL'S
ACTUALLY A
THINLY VEILED
MEMOIR.



not Simple

THAT'S
WHAT MY
WIFE SAID.

AND NOW
THEY'RE
SAVING THE
REAL WRITER
DISAPPEARED,
RIGHT?



THAT HE
MIGHT
BE DEAD.

#01

not simple









...THAT YOU
WERE JACKING
STUFF BECAUSE
YOU NEEDED
MONEY TO LIVE
WITH YOUR
BROTHER?

DIDNT
YOU SAY
BEFORE...



I DONT
WUNNA
GEB
ANYONE
ELSES
ANYWAY!

HE'S
ALL I
NEED.



HE'S
STILL
YOUNG,
AMT
HE?

AYES
HE'S
BETTER
OFF AT
HOM.
CLOSE
TO HIS
PARENTS
...

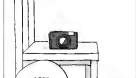


I'M
TAKING
HM AND
GETTING
OUT OF
TOWN.

WAITER
YOU
DONT
DO WHEN
YOU'RE
RELEASED?



TO HELL
WITH THAT
FAMILY.



LOOK
OVER
THERE
AND
SMILE.



LET'S TAKE
ANOTHER
ONE SOON.

OKAY.

CAN
I GO
RUNNING
NOW?

YES. BE
CAREFUL.



I WONDER
IF IT'LL
COME OUT
ALL RIGHT?

WHY
DIDN'T YOU
HAVE HIM
TAKE IT?

DAD'S
HERE
TODAY
TOO.

I CAN'T
SMILE RIGHT
WHEN THOSE
PEOPLE ARE
AROUND.



HOW
OLD IS HE
AGAIN?

THIRTEEN.

YOU
TWO ARE
PRETTY
FAR APART
TODAY.

WERE YOU
PLANNING
ON SHOPPING
TOWN
WITH HIM?

ARMED
ROBBERY.
THAT WAS
PRETTY
RECKLESS.



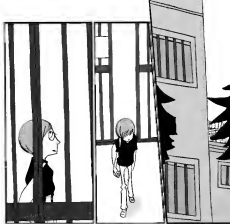
MY
BROTHER
WANTS
TO BE A
SPEAKER.

REALLY
?

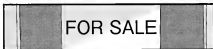
HE'S
DONE
WELL IN
SOME
LOCAL
MEETS.

THAT'S
GREAT.



















A DRUNK
LIKE HER
COULD
NEVER
SUPPORT
HIM!



SHE WANTS
HIM TO
SUPPORT HER.

MAYBE...



MY NEW
WIFE
DOESN'T
LIE
CHILDREN.

DON'T
GIVE
ME
THAT!



WHY DIDN'T
YOU CLAIM
CUSTODY?!

SHE CAN
SPEND ALL
THE CHILD
SUPPORT
ON BOOZES.



AN
ALCOHOLIC

WITH ZERO
ABILITY
TO MAKE A
LIVING...

AND, MOST
IMPORTANTLY,
SHE'S NOT
EVEN HIS
BIOLOGICAL
MOTHER.



YOU
WANT TO
KNOW THE
TRUTH?

THE TRUTH
IS SHE JUST
TOOK DAN AND
WENT BACK
TO ENGLAND.



DO YOU
THINK THEY'D
ACTUALLY
GIVE HER
CUSTODY?



HAVE YOU
TRIED TO
GET HIM
BACK?



I REALLY
AM GETTING
REARRANGED.

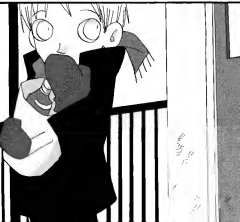
NO,
I'VE
BEEN
BUSY.













YOU DRINK
ANY MORE
AND YOU'LL
REALLY DIE!



I CAN'T
BELIEVE
THIS

I WON'T
BE ABLE
TO LOOK
AFTER YOU
IF YOU'RE IN
HOSPITAL

ALL I
NEED YOU
TO LOOK
AFTER IS
MY TAB







SHE'S
ALWAYS
BEEN
LIKE THIS.



EVERYTHING
SHE'S DONE
HAS BEEN ON
THE SPUR OF
THE MOMENT.

EVEN HER
DIVORCE.
I HAD NO
IDEA.



THEN
SHE COMES
BACK OUT
OF NOWHERE
ASKING ME
FOR MONEY.

I HAVE A
FAMILY OF
MY OWN.

I CAN TRY
AND HELP,
BUT I CAN'T
RESCUE HER...
ANY MONEY I
GIVE HER GOES
STRAIGHT TO
THE BOTTLE.







NEXT
TIME I'LL
TELL HER
EVERYTHING
ABOUT
YOU TOO.

I'M
SURE
SHE'LL
CALL
ASIAN.



BUT WHY
WAS SHE
ROBBING
STORES?

I
THINK
SO.

IS SHE
HERBY?



YOU
DIDN'T
KNOW
ABOUT
THAT
EITHER?

...



YOUR
MOTHER TOLD
ME NOT TO
TELL ANYONE,
SO I TOLD
YOUR SISTER
I DIDN'T KNOW
WHERE YOU
WERE.

BUT I
SHOULDN'T
BE KEEPING
GUYS.









BY THE
WAY, WHY
DID THEY
DIVORCE?

IAN? HE'S
HERE TOO.
MAY. HE'S
DOING ALL
RIGHT.



MAY. MAY.

SHE'S
HERE.



IT WAS
THE BOTH
OF 'EM.

BECAUSE
OF HIS
AFFAIR?

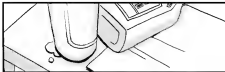


I SIMPLY
DON'T
UNDERSTAND
HOW THIS
HAPPENED.

IT
WASN'T
JUST HIM.

THEY'VE
BOTH
ALWAYS
HAD
SOME-
BODY
ELSE.













SORRY,
BUT...

...I ONLY
WORK
WITH KIDS
IN THEIR
TWENTIES.



LIQUOR
STORE



MY
NEIGHBOR
LIKES HER
AND IN
FALL THIS
MORNING...

I'LL
GET HER
JUST ONE
BOTTLE...



...I
CAN'T
HELP
YOU.

I CAN TELL
YOU HAD IT
GOING ON
BACK IN
THE DAY...

BUT AT
YOUR
AGE...



...WILL A
BOY DO?

WHEN
YOU SAY
KIDS...



THERE'S
SOMETHING
FOR EVERYONE
AND SOMEBODY
FOR EVERY-
THING.



YOU
SURE?



ISN'T
HE YOUR
SON?



THEN COULD
YOU FIND A
CUSTOMER
FOR HIM?



#03 not simple







DON'T
YOU BE
LOOKING
AT ME
LIKE THAT.

YOU'LL
HAVE TO
SIGN SOME
PAPERS.

STAY
HERE.

I SAID
HE'S
YOURS.

His OWN
MOTHER'S
SAID IT'S
FINE, SO
IT'S FINE.



YOU'RE
STARTING
TO LOOK
MORE AND
MORE
LIKE HIM.













BUT WHY
AREN'T YOU
MAKING
YOUR DAD
PAY? TO GO
PICK HIM UP,
I MEAN.

ANYTHING
FOR A
FRIEND. YOU
KNOW I'M
ALWAYS HERE
FOR YOU.



IS THIS
ENOUGH?

THANKS.
I OWE
YOU ONE.



I MEAN,
HE IS THE
BOY'S
FATHER...



I JUST
DIDN'T
WANT TO
ASK HIM.

HE'D
PAY IF I
ASKED
HIM TO.



I'M THE
ONE WHO'LL
BE RAISING
JAM FROM
NOW ON.
NOT THEM.



I'LL TRY
TO PAY
YOU BACK
AS SOON
AS I CAN.

...
I HOPE
YOU TWO
CAN FINALLY
FIND SOME
PEACE.













THAT THE
REASON SHE
BECAME AN
ALCOHOLIC.



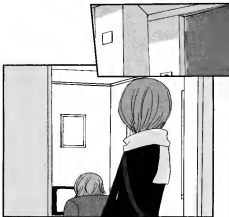
SHE WAS
TOO YOUNG
TO BE
TRAPPED AT
HOME AS A
HOUSEWIFE.

BUT...
SHE WASN'T
A DRUNK.



SHE WAS
NEVER
A GOOD
MOTHER.







YOU
CAME HERE
FASTER
THAN I
EXPECTED.

I THOUGHT
IT'D TAKE YOU
LONGER.



I WAS HOPING
TO WORK THAT
CUTE "LITTLE
BROTHER" OF
YOURS AS LONG
AS I COULD.

YOU TOOK
IAN WITH
YOU TO GET
BACK AT ME,
DIDN'T YOU?





...THAT'S
RIGHT.



HURRY UP
AND TAKE
THAT KID...



AND
GET
OUT.





















I'LL BE
WITH YOU
UNTIL
YOU DIE.

I'LL
LOOK
AFTER
YOU.

I'LL DO
ANYTHING.

























YOU TWO
LOOK SO
ALIKE.



NOW I
FINALLY
GET TO
MEET
YOU.

HE'S
BEEN
PUTTING
THIS OFF,
BUT...







HE LIKES
RUNNING.

HE
WANTS
TO RUN
HOME.

29
I AM NOT
COMING
WITH US?



MOM
DIDN'T
LIKE IT
EITHER.



DAD
DIDN'T
SEEM
HAPPY
WHEN SHE
SAID HE
LOOKED
ALIKE.





I MISS
KYLE.

I WANT
SEE HER
AND TALK
TO HER.



DID YOU RUN
HERE AGAIN, LAM?

HERE'S
THE LETTER.

STAY
AND HAVE
SOMETHING
TO DRINK.



THANKS,
BUT I
HAVE TO
GET
BACK.



SEE
YOU.

YEAH,
BYE.



AAAA

HELLO?



OH,
KYLE!



IAN WAS
JUST HERE
TO PICK
UP YOUR
LETTER.

BUT HE'S
ALREADY
LEFT



IT'S
BEEN A
WHILE
NOW.

KYLE.

WHENRE
YOU TWO
GONNA
SEE EACH
OTHER?

WE CAN'T...
NOT UNTIL
HE REACHES
HIS GOAL.

SO
WHAT IS
HIS GOAL,
KYLE?

I DON'T
KNOW.

I'M
PRETTY
SETTLED
IN.

BUT HE'S
TRYING TO
KEEP HIS
PROMISE.

RIGHT
IT BEEN
LONG
ENOUGH?



...I HAVE
AN IDEA
OF WHAT IT
MIGHT BE.

BUT...



BUT
HE'LL SAY
HE MADE A
PROMISE.

IF I'M
RIGHT,
IT'LL STILL
BE A WHILE
BEFORE
WE MEET
AGAIN.

OF
COURSE
NOT, I DO
WANT TO
SEE HIM.

AND
YOU'RE
FINE
WITH
THAT?

AND
SO...

I'LL
WAIT
FOR
YOU.





#05 real simple







BE
CAREFUL.
DON'T
FALL!



YOU
REALLY
LIKE
RUNNING,
DON'T
YOU?



OHAY.













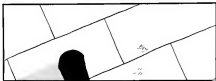


#06 red simple





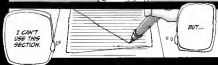














HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU'VE SEEN HER?

GW...

NOT SINCE I WAS FOURTEEN.



AFTER I DO IT, I GOT TO GO SEE MY SISTER.

HUH?



MY SISTER'S IN LONDON. HE PROMISED TO MEET AGAIN WHEN MY DREAM...

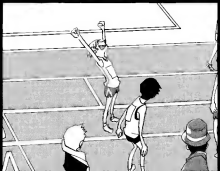
COMES TRUE.

REALLY...



FOR SOME REASON, I SOMETIMES THINK...







HE ONLY
FINISHED
FOURTH, BUT
THE WAY HE
CELEBRATED...



A
"DREAM,"
HUMP







THEY MIGHT
TAKE IT THE
WRONG WAY.

NOT MANY
PEOPLE
KNOW WHY
YOU DID IT.

ABOUT
YOUR LITTLE
"PERFORMANCES"
THE OTHER DAY.



...DIDN'T
YOU
USE OUR
INTERVIEW
IN THE
ARTICLE?

BY
THE WAY,
WHY...



YEAH.



I DECIDED
TO KEEP IT
TO MYSELF.

I'VE
BEEN
TOLD,
BUT
IT'S
OKAY.



FOR MY
NOVEL.

